

From: Paul Tackett
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/23/02 9:57pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I am a concerned citizen and a concerned consumer who wants to speak out about the potential settlement with Microsoft. I believe that it would be irresponsible of the government to allow Microsoft to continue doing business as it has done over the last decade. Unfortunately, the proposed settlement does not do enough to encourage Microsoft to alter those practices. Microsoft is well-known for its predatory practices against rival companies and its aggressive maneuvering against start-up companies who bring innovation into the market place. Microsoft has overstated its role as an innovator in the technology sector: many of their "innovations" are actually adaptations of other technologies. Two primary examples that illustrate this point are Microsoft's copying of the "look and feel" of the Macintosh operating system in their implementation of Windows 95-Windows ME, and Microsoft's copying of the basic Internet browser and destroying of a viable business model of their competitor, Netscape. Microsoft has done considerable harm to innovation by the use of their aggressive tactics.

I understand Microsoft's importance in the modern economy. Microsoft is a widely held stock and many Americans rely on this stock for security in their portfolios or retirement plans. Unfortunately, the costs that the consumers face in the future has much greater down-side for Americans and world consumers. For instance, In January 2002, an internal Microsoft memo was leaked to the public in which it was made clear that Linux is now a clear target for the use of aggressive business tactics. This indicates that Microsoft has no serious interest in modifying their past behaviors. If the Department of Justice allows a prescedent to be set now that is as lenient on Microsoft as this settlement is, Microsoft will be less fearful of any actions in the future. This should concern us all.

Please remember the opinion of this concerned, voting citizen during your deliberations about the best method to ensure security for the consumers and protection for the values of a market system where competition is encouraged, not suffocated.

Paul C. Tackett
743 Cambridge Drive
Battle Creek, MI 49015-4601